



Soldier escapes Dictator, becomes officer in U.S. Army
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Fight STDs with HPV vaccine See Page 12A

New beginning for WIC office
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The Newspaper of the 3rd Infantry Division

THE FRONTLINE



IMCOM
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Visit from the U.S. Army Chief of Staff



Sgt. Robert Schaffner

U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George Casey Jr. arrives by helicopter at Fort Stewart and prepares for a long day ahead. See story on page 3A.

Active shooter exercise prepares installation

Spc. Michael Adams
3rd ID Public Affairs

In order to prepare for any potential crises that may come to Fort Stewart, the installation conducted a training exercise, Feb. 9.

During the exercise, a role-player, posing as a live-fire shooter, took over the Soldier Service Center on the installation and took hostages. Military policemen on the installation attempted to capture the gunman and lead the hostages to safety.

Major John Stanley serves as the mobilization chief for Stewart. He was one of the people who organized the exercise.

He stated the overall goals of the exercise we to give the first responders training to deal with a potential crisis like this, give the Special Response Team for Fort Stewart a chance to deal with a real-life crisis scenario, give hostage negotiators a chance to practice leading potential hostages to safety and give civilian employees the opportunity to train on evacuating during a potential crisis and the ability to handle a crisis while it happens.

"We were successful in accomplishing those goals," said Maj. Stanley. "Anytime you get an opportunity to do one of these exercises it obviously pays big dividends in our readiness. There's nothing more important than the safety and security of our Soldiers and civilians on this installation. And we take that very seriously."

See EXERCISE — Page 2A

Second Lady visits school, speaks with spouses

Elvia Kelly
Fort Stewart Public Affairs

As the halls of Joseph Martin Elementary School stand filled with decorative photo boards of Soldiers and their Families, the teachers and students waited for the arrival of a special guest, one who holds military Families dear to her heart. Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden, accompanied by Mrs. Sheila Casey, visited the home of the 3rd Infantry Division, Feb. 14.

Her visit is not without purpose. Dr. Biden is an advocate of education for Military Families. As a Blue Star mom and a teacher, she understands the importance of quality education for all Americans.

Shortly after greeting the children of Joseph Martin, Dr. Biden met with teachers and administrators to discuss issues regarding school systems, deployments, and the Military Family. Her hope was to hear about positive aspects of the community as well as the negative, and avenues to improve the issues discussed at the meeting held at Joseph Martin's media center.

"Making good education possible for Military Families is close to my heart," said Dr. Biden. "I'm a military mom; I'm a teacher, and I bring greetings from the First Lady and the President because this is one of the major issues they want to work on. It's having good education for all Americans. Thank you for talking with us, and seeing what's good, what's bad, and what we can make better."

After speaking with Joseph Martin's professionals, Dr. Biden attended a meet-and-greet with Army spouses at Club Stewart. As they eagerly waited for Dr. Biden's coming on this special Valentine's Day, the spouses conversed amongst themselves over lunch.

"I think [Dr. Biden visiting with spouses] is great. I know that their schedules are jam-packed to the minute," said Kelly Clark, a Family Member who attended the meet-and-greet at Club Stewart. "So, the fact that they can take time out to come and just meet with us and be part of our world for a short time and hear what we have to say is a great opportunity for us."

See BIDEN — Page 2A



Elvia Kelly

Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden accompanied by Mrs. Sheila Casey visit teachers and students at Joseph Martin Elementary School, Feb. 14. She greets the children of Joseph Martin as they ate lunch at the school's cafeteria.

African-American warriors past, present remembered during ceremony

Spc. Crystal O'Neal
2nd HBCT Public Affairs

Warriors of various races, creeds and backgrounds fill the ranks of the United States Army. Though these Soldiers may appear to be different on the outside, they all share one thing in common – the uniform.

Second Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers recognized Black History month during an observance held Feb. 15, at Club Stewart.

Praise dancers performed to cultural African-American music, while the Marne Musical Performance Team took attendees on a trip through time singing and performing old Negro anthems,

rhythm and blues, and music from the late "King of Pop," Michael Jackson.

Next, Soldiers dressed in historical Army uniforms dating as far back as the Civil War up to present time, Operation New Dawn, marched in a skit "IAM," acknowledging the feats of different African-American warriors and their contributions to the United States Army.

Staff Sergeant Cheruan Newsome, Company A, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd HBCT, who earned a Purple Heart during Operation New Dawn, participated in the skit as himself and said being a part of the program made him truly proud.

See WARRIORS — Page 2A

Marne 6 says go to PC Feb 22

Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo
3rd ID Commander

Beginning Feb. 22, the duty uniform for 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers is the Army Combat Uniform with patrol cap vice the black beret. The black beret will still be worn for ceremonies and also worn when traveling on temporary duty away from 3rd ID home stations of Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield or Kelley Hill at Fort Benning.

"Bottom line," said Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, 3rd Infantry Division commander, "if you wear a Marne Patch, switch your standard daily headgear to the patrol cap next Tuesday, Feb. 22. Soldiering in the 3rd ID is an out-

door sport, and Coastal Georgia brings both bright sunshine and routine thunderstorms - conditions that call for headgear with a brim. It just makes sense. But keep that beret close by and in good shape: It is worn with the Army Service Uniform, and we will still wear it with ACUs for ceremonies such as changes of command, promotions, or as directed for payday activities, or whenever a 3rd ID commander - company, battery, troop and above - deems an occasion calls for a beret.

"Also, any and all travel out of our area done in uniform calls for the beret, not the patrol cap," he added. "So, consider the PC your 'working headgear' for performance of duties at home station only."

See UNIFORM — Page 8A



From the GC's desk: Suicide prevention starts with you



Col. Kevin Milton
Stewart-Hunter garrison commander

My fellow community members, I want to take an opportunity to share with you a story about suicide prevention; which reinforced a conviction I have that each of us can help make a difference. Each of us can help carry

the message that when times seem darkest – You are not alone.

I was recently told a story of how one of our Civilian employees, who supports Soldiers but rarely has contact with them, was at work one day and received an email from a deployed Soldier who was having a difficult time. The Soldier relayed to her that he was in charge of 15 others and was worried daily about having to report one of their deaths to their Family Members.

He talked about ending his own life due to the pressures and dangers in the combat zone. She replied back asking what he needed. He asked for a Bible; which might help him carry on. She sent him the Bible and inscribed her name and the name of her church.

When the Soldier redeployed he made a point of seeking out the church and the lady who had sent him the Bible. In that church one Sunday, after redeployment, he held up the Bible she had sent him and said that she had saved him.

This woman, unknown to me, is an ordinary person doing extraordinary things. I wonder how many others she has saved just by simply doing good works that we may never hear about.

My point in telling this story is to give you an example of how we can be sensors and be on the lookout for the signs that someone we know may be suffering

and in need of help, and to also share the many installation resources available to all members of the community.

Suicide prevention starts with leaders, veteran spouses of the community, and civilian leadership: You are our first line of defense against the tragedy of suicide. Leaders as you move about the community, troop the line, walk through the facilities, stop by the barracks, eat a meal in the dining establishments, or wherever members of the Army Family gather, take those opportunities to look each and every member in the eye and convey that THEY MATTER and are valued by YOU and the Army at large.

Veteran spouses, be aware of your surroundings and stand ready to assist or call someone who can assist when you suspect a problem. Encourage spouses on your team to attend the Spouse Empowerment Convention, Feb. 24 at the Main Post Chapel, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. No preregistration is necessary. Come, be empowered. You might learn something that will be beneficial to you in your Family and community life.

Leaders there are a multitude of resources available to you in conducting your program. Contact the Multimedia Visual Information Services Center (912-767-7913) for these valuable tools: A Leader's Guide to Suicide Prevention, Family Member Warning Sign & Risk Tip Card, Suicide Prevention Tip Cards, ACE Cards, Battle Buddy OneSource Cards, Military OneSource Cards, Suicide Prevention: Warning Signs & Risk Factors card, Leader's Suicide Prevention Manual, Shoulder to Shoulder- I will never quit on life (Video), Beyond the Front (Role Play Video), and Home Front (Role Play Video).

Leaders can also take advantage of these programs: ASIST TRAINING, ACE Intervention training (monthly 4 hour), ACE Intervention (Shoulder to Shoulder monthly one hour), Suicide Response Drills (monthly and upon request), Unit and Family Readiness Group Presentations (upon request). Just contact the Suicide Prevention Task Force Manager for more

information or to schedule an appointment, call 912-767-5828.

You Are Not Alone! If you or someone you know is experiencing a life-threatening emergency or is attempting to commit suicide, the first response is to call 911.

There are many other programs offered at Stewart-Hunter to promote team building, communication, and to help build resiliency. These programs include financial readiness programs, Family Advocacy Programs, chaplains, and behavioral health counseling services. Let's make sure Soldiers, DA Civilians and Family Members are aware of these programs and encourage them to take advantage of the services. Call Army Community Services at 912-767-5058 to get more information.

Locally, you can call for other urgent mental health concerns. Specialists are available during normal duty hours (Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.):

- *Fort Stewart Behavioral Health Clinic* (Worcester Ave., building 9242), 912-767-1654 or 912 767-1647.

- *Army Substance Abuse Program*: 912-767-8667.

- *Fort Stewart Family Life Chaplains*: 912-767-1814.

- *Mental Health Community/Military and Family Life Consultants* (Worcester Ave., building 9242), 912-432-8980.

- *Family Support Issues/Family Readiness Center* (191 Lindquist Rd., building 87), 912-767-5058

- *Hunter Army Airfield Tuttle Army Health Clinic* (230 Duncan Drive, Building 1440): 912-315-4240/6125. Call 911 during non-duty hours.

Additionally, there is an on-call Chaplain on duty 24/7. Contact the Division Operations Center at 912-767-8667 to request chaplain assistance for yourself or for someone you believe is depressed and in danger of harming themselves.

Remember You Are Not Alone!

EXERCISE

from Page 1A

Behind the scenes, Maj. Stanley added that the Emergency Operations Center on Stewart were accounting for everyone in the building, coordinating and giving resources and following orders of the garrison commander to make sure the crisis was resolved.

During the exercise, there were people who played shooting victims, complete with fake wounds, who were lying on the ground screaming in pain. Military policemen, first responders and the Stewart SRT eventually tended to all victims, neutralized the shooter and led the hostages to safety.

Preparation for this exercise began almost a year ago and involved every directorate on the installation in order to make sure everyone on the installation understood how to deal with such a crisis.

Judy Waynick is the installation adjutant general. She was in the building when the scenario happened. As part of the training, everyone in the building was supposed to withdraw to their offices, lock their doors and dial 911, which she did.

While she was not a hostage, she sat in her office, and heard victims screaming and gunshots fired.

“The exercise worked pretty well,” she said. “We’ve been discussing this now for about a month or so, or actually since the shooting at Fort Hood and we’ve developed a pretty good plan to respond to this kind of thing at the Directorate of Human Resources.”

Waynick added that she worked with someone who was in the same building at the time of the murders at Fort Hood. Her co-worker said there was no plan to respond to a potential live-shooter scenario like this and that she feels a lot more secure knowing there is a plan to respond to potential scenarios like this.

Sergeant Douglas Chapman, the non-commissioned officer in-charge of the SRT, led the team to capture the gunman during the training exercise.

“We were able to identify points we need to work on,” he said of the exercise. “We can use this to develop future training plans and exercises to make sure that we address those issues that we identified so that in a real-life incident, those mistakes aren’t made.”

Sergeant Chapman added this was the most realistic training the installation will get to deal with this kind of scenario.



Spc. Michael Adams

Soldiers with the 385th Military Police Battalion Special Response Team prepare to enter the Soldier Service Center to capture gunmen during a training exercise, Feb. 9., at Stewart. During the exercise, Soldiers and civilians pretended to be gunmen that took hostages, and the emergency services at Fort Stewart trained on how to capture the gunmen, give medical treatment to victims and lead hostages to safety.

BIDEN

from Page 1A

Clark, who has children in Liberty County’s public school system and is an educator as well, looks forward to hearing Dr. Biden’s message to military spouses. She is interested in knowing how Dr. Biden’s ideas of a good education system will come into effect.

“We’re having a lunch meeting with Dr. Jill Biden and Ms. Casey during their visit,” explains Clark, “to hear about their ideas within the Army and their programs that they’re working on. I’m assuming to get some feedback on how we see those things playing out here at Fort Stewart.”

Dr. Biden and Mrs. Casey were received with a round of applause as Family Members stood to welcome them at Club Stewart’s Palmetto Room.

“I am a Blue Star mom, and I’d like you to know that our administration is totally committed to making things better for military Families,” shared Dr. Biden. “You do so much, all of you, whether you are deployed or not deployed. Whether you are a Military Family [or not], you are serving, too. We realize that. Michelle [Obama] and I have really made it our priority going around to bases and listening to Families. We are taking it a step further and making sure that we hear you and that

we’re answering your needs.”

The plight of Military Families is something Dr. Biden keeps close to her heart. She wants the military community to know that it is her goal to seek ways to improve the issues and challenges Family Members face.

“I liked that both Dr. Biden and Mrs. Casey were so accessible and mingled through the crowd,” said Clark. “I was expecting more of an informal Q&A type session, but can’t say that I was disappointed. I am pleased to have had the chance to meet them both. This Army life is full of many interesting opportunities - today was simply an example of that.”

At the conclusion of Dr. Biden’s visit, she briefly answered questions at a Press Conference held near Marne Garden.

She shared that it was a great honor to meet with all the Blue Star Families, and her visit to Joseph Martin was a pleasant one.

And for Clark, Dr. Biden’s visit marked a great opportunity for Army Families to hear, firsthand, the Administration’s plan for the military community.

“Dr. Biden is a tremendous advocate for our military children in the area of education, a point near and dear to my heart as a mother and teacher,” said Clark.

WARRIORS

from Page 1A

“I felt very humbled and gracious when asked to portray myself as one of the Soldiers recognized in the skit,” said Staff Sgt. Newsome. “I think the skit showed that no matter what era has been here in the United States, African-Americans have answered to the call of duty and we, just as any other American citizen is, are willing to die defending our nation.”

The guest speaker of the observance, Ret. Command Sgt. Maj. Michele S. Jones, Special Assistant and Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), challenged all Soldiers and leaders to look at those that have gone before them and take something positive away.

“Those who have gone before us and who have made history did not do it by thinking about them alone; they helped others and

therefore, they are remembered for it,” she said. “Each Soldier here, especially non-commissioned officers, should take some knowledge and history from this observance and use it to make our Army stronger.”

Captain Anne Gildhouse, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID and officer in charge of the event, said she felt extremely honored to be a part of the observance.

“The event today was about all Soldiers coming together to celebrate African-Americans and their many impacts they have had on the country including the arts, music and on the battle field,” said Cpt. Gildhouse. “I don’t know what it would be like some of their contributions and today was a chance to show them appreciation.”

Cultural African-American foods and refreshments were served at the end of the observance.



Spc. Crystal O’Neal

Spartan Soldiers dressed in historical uniforms dating back to the Civil War perform in a skit recognizing past African-American warriors during the Black History Month Observance held Feb. 15, 2011 at Club Stewart in Fort Stewart, Ga.



Photo by Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.

Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. visits with Soldiers for a town hall meeting at Fort Stewart's Marne Chapel, Feb. 14. During the town hall meeting, Gen. Casey spoke and answered questions and concerns from the audience.

Army Chief of Staff visits Marne Soldiers

Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.
3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs

As the tenure as the 36th Army Chief of Staff draws to an end, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., visited Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga., Feb. 14, accompanied by his wife Shiela and Dr. Jill Biden.

After an aerial tour of both Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Stewart while aboard a UH 60 Black Hawk helicopter, Gen. Casey began his Fort Stewart ground visit with a closed-door briefing with 3rd ID Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, and key Fort Stewart leaders to discuss recent and current deployments.

Meanwhile, Sheila Casey and Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, joined Ginger Cucolo for a meeting with 3rd ID spouses at Club Stewart. Then they went to Joseph Martin Elementary School, where they greeted children at lunch hour and met with teachers and guidance counselors.

Upon conclusion of the meeting, the fast-paced visit continued as Gen. Casey took part in a deployment awards ceremony, presenting the Distinguished Flying Cross to five Soldiers from 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade and the Purple Heart to seven Soldiers from 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team at Marne Garden.

"As I have watched us navigate around this last decade at war, which this September will be 10 years, I am struck by the mutual bond of trust... and you see the output of that trust in the awards that we present today," Gen. Casey said during the ceremony. "It is that bond of trust, that commitment to one another, that has helped us as an Army during this last dif-

ficult decade and makes us what we are today – the greatest Army on the face of the earth."

In typical Gen. Casey fashion of ensuring close contact with all of his Soldiers, he pressed on from the flag-adorned Marne Garden to a more private venue, where he was well-received by approximately 400 junior-ranking Dog Face Soldiers for a town hall meeting to discuss concerns, ideas and the future of their Army. At the end, he opened the floor to receive and answer questions.

"I asked him – as a young Soldier willing to stay in the military as a career – what words of wisdom he could give," said Spc. Jarrod Godrey, 1-3 Brigade Troops Battalion, 1st HBCT. "For someone at that high of a level to actually take the time and show his presence here, it shows a lot of passion and his love of the job."

The Soldiers in attendance appreciated the face time with the top Soldier in the Army.

"I think it's awesome that he came down to Fort Stewart and he took questions – informal, grass roots questions," said Staff Sgt. Enrique Irby, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 3rd ID. "I really appreciated that from him."

General Casey completed his Fort Stewart visit with a press conference, where he congratulated the Marne Division for their successful mission in Iraq.

"I'd just like to say congratulations to the men and woman and the Families of the 3rd Infantry Division for the absolutely wonderful job they did in Iraq," said Gen. Casey. "As things continue to get better in Iraq, it is because of the sacrifices of the men and woman like these Soldiers, going back and forth to Iraq."



Photo by Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.

U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr. arrives by helicopter at Fort Stewart and prepares for a long day ahead.



Photo by Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.

U.S. Army Chief of Staff George W. Casey Jr. accompanied by Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, 3rd Infantry Division commanding general, and key Fort Stewart leaders prepare for a closed-door meeting to discuss recent and current deployments, Feb. 14.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer K. Yancy

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Eric D. Sikes, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, salutes U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., after being presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross during an award ceremony at Fort Stewart's Marne Garden, Feb. 14.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer Yancy

U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., awards the Purple Heart to Sgt. Cody J. Taylor, 5th Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, during an award ceremony at Fort Stewart's Marne Garden, Feb. 14. Sergeant Taylor received the Purple Heart for wounds received from an IED attack, Nov. 16, 2010.



From Ginger's Desk:


Resiliency Training

 for the brain!

Ginger Cucolo
Spouse of Maj. Gen Tony Cucolo
3rd ID Commanding General


For the next five weeks I plan on writing about Resiliency. You got my “Whatever” start to it last week, so...

What could be written about this week?



I'd like to address certain myths we all live with. If we understand them, then we might be able to accept new ways of dealing with things. That's a light bulb, florescent, yes,  but it goes along with my topic. The standard light bulb is good,

- but the new florescent one is more energy efficient. Like we need to be.
- Let's look at things we might think are okay:**
- Never show emotion
 - It's about me
 - Handle everything on your own
 - Faster is better
 - Always be composed
- What's better for us:**
- Regulate emotion
 - It's about individuals and relationships
 - It's okay to ask for help
 - Slower may be better

No one has to be perfect

One might think Resiliency is just something people are born with. That's not true. All of us can learn a behavior or way of thinking that develop into a better way of reacting or understanding an event. Like  shifting gears. By doing that, we can be better leaders, be healthier, do better in sports and performing under pressure, have stronger relationships and be more successful at work and school.

Why would we not want to be all those things?

Make the decision to be a  tennis ball instead of an  egg!

Marne Faces



Marne Places

Black History Month: NCO makes the most of military career

Jennifer Hartwig
Hunter Army Airfield Public Affairs

In 1992, Sgt. 1st Class Theresa Abraham was a single mother living in Arkansas, working two, sometimes three jobs to make ends meet. That fall she decided to make a change – she joined the Army.

“Being a single parent and working two jobs, sometimes three, to maintain a household, and then joining the military and making in one job what I was making in three jobs, it gave me a lot more time to spend with my son,” said Sgt. 1st Class Abraham. “It gave me a lot more time to help him with his homework, and just to be around him.”

In 1995, she met someone with whom she would spend her life, Sgt. 1st Class Kentus Abraham, who she married in 1997. Kentus is currently deployed to Iraq with the 512th Quartermaster Company.

More than 18 years after enlisting as a Petroleum Supply Specialist, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham is stationed at Hunter Army Airfield, assigned to the 260th Quartermaster Battalion, but attached to U.S. Army Garrison, Hunter Army Airfield as operations noncommissioned officer, a position she has been in for the past year. Previously, she was with 260th Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company for a year. In the fall of 2004, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham arrived at Hunter for the first time, as an operations NCO with the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade.



Jennifer Hartwig

Sergeant First Class Theresa Abraham, operations NCOIC, works with Spc. Steven Heng, USAG Hunter Army Airfield, and LeAndre Anderson, Emergency Operations Speciliast, on a garrison project. Sergeant First Class Abraham works with both Soldiers and civilians on a daily basis in her role at Hunter Army Airfield's garrison headquarters.

“I arrived here in September 2004, my husband and I bought a house, we closed on it in November and in January we handed our keys over to our neighbors who we'd just met – who are retired Marines – and deployed to Iraq for 12 months,” she said.

It was her second deployment, the first coming while she was still a single parent, when she deployed on a peacekeeping mission to Bosnia with her unit in Germany, from 1995-1996. Her son was with her in Germany for about five months before it was decided that her unit would deploy.

“It was really hard to put my son on a plane and send him back to the United States,” she said. “I looked at him, and I said ‘Baby, Mommy has to deploy. But if you tell me you don't want me to go, I won't go.’ Then he asked, ‘Well then mommy, where are we gonna stay if you get out?’ Then he said ‘I'll be ok, I'll stay with grandma.’ Being able to talk to my son, and knowing that he was ok and knowing that he was being taken care of, that's what got me through that deployment.”

With her husband deployed and her son grown, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham now spends a majority of her time with someone else.

“The most important thing to me right now, when I get off work, I have to spend two hours with my baby,” she said.

“Now my baby is a bichon frise, his name is Happy. He is absolutely adorable.”

She said that the first two hours she gets home from work belong to Happy, and the next two- to-three hours are spent on the computer, where she works towards her master's degree from Excelsior University. While in the Army, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham has made the most of the educational opportunities offered by the military.

“Since I've been in the military, I've had the opportunity to go to college,” she said. “I've earned two associates degrees, a bachelor's degree, and now I'm currently working on my master's degree in environmental management. So being in the military has really been a great success for me.”

For those Soldiers she supervises, they see how she has achieved success.

“She's fair but she's stern and tough,” said Sgt. Craig Kandar, assigned to the 260th Quartermaster Battalion, but serving garrison as community liaison noncommissioned officer in charge of the mayor's program. “She allows other

Soldiers and other NCOs to grow. She's a great coach and mentor when it comes to teaching Soldiers. She's always in a good mood; she's always open-minded about every idea that comes from anybody. She likes to get things done, and done quick and right.”

When Sgt. 1st Class Abraham joined the Army in a male-dominated MOS, she said female NCOs were rare. For female Soldiers who now serve beneath her, she is a role model.

“I look up to her in pretty much all aspects” said Sgt. Donna Campbell, USAG Hunter Army Airfield. “Her being a female, it makes me want to strive more to become her rank, and to get it as quickly as I possibly can. Not just to become her rank, but also to wear the leadership that she does in that rank. I definitely admire her leadership skills ... her interaction with different people and just the way she goes about things is very professional. I definitely admire that and I hope to mirror that.”

In her post-Army life, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham hopes to work with under privileged children, who she thinks she can help through her life experiences.

“I came from a single Family home – my father died when I was in the third grade so my mother raised us by herself,” she said. “We didn't have a lot, we shared clothes, we shared food, we shared everything. But, we had plenty of love for each other, for my mother and for my grandparents. And I just saw that there were a lot of children who grew up right around me who didn't make it out and I just feel like they didn't make it because they didn't have the love that we had.”

Sergeant First Class Abraham said that growing up in Arkansas wasn't what people imagine, and, in fact, it helped her have an easier transition into the Army.

“People have a misconception of Arkansas being a prejudiced state and Arkansas being diverse and divided ... I didn't see that growing up,” she said. “I didn't experience racism, I didn't experience hatred, hate crimes, I didn't experience any of that. We all lived together – black, white, everybody. So when I came into the Army, I saw nothing different.”

She entered the Army as a single mother scraping to make ends meet, and now she is a role model to young Soldiers. She said she has the military to thank for her growth.

“I have definitely become a more subtle, disciplined person by joining the military,” she said. “I'll be the first to tell you I was a wild one when I came in. And coming into the military, having order and discipline ... it's just been a wonderful thing for me. I think the most important thing that I've learned is to be yourself. Be yourself, take pride in yourself, take pride in what you do, and respect those around you and they'll respect you.”

Marne Voices Speak Out

February 21 is President's Day.

What would you do if you were President?

“Eliminate job outsourcing to other countries.”



Spc. Michael Adams
3rd ID Public Affairs



“I would control the budget and distribute the money where needed.”

Mary Ruth-Montoya
Civilian

“Make it a better place, get schools to be more active.”



Morgan Wester
Family Member




“Help people learn about safety.”

Xavier Bryant
Family Member

“Increase retirement checks.”



Jacquelin Lett
Retiree



“Bring all the troops home.”

Staff Sgt. Motuofe Satele
1/30 Infantry

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EYE ON SECURITY

Resist the temptation of advance fee frauds

Guy Shifflett

DPTMS, Information Security

Many of us have received unsolicited emails that attempt to entice us in making a decision that goes against our better judgment. The promise of easy money or services for such a small investment is just too good to pass up.

When contemplating what you know is risky Behavior, keep in mind the old adage, "if it seems too good to be true, then it normally is".

What I'm referring to is "Advance Fee Fraud." Don't be conned; it is a scam that steals hundreds of millions of dollars world-wide.

Advance Fee Fraud is designed to rip you off and in most instances you stand

almost no chance to recoup your money. One of the most common is the Nigerian Advance Fee Fraud, known internationally as 4-1-9 fraud, named after the Nigerian penal code.

Many different approaches have spun off this successful criminal activity designed to play on human nature.

Resist the temptation. Don't convince yourself otherwise; if not it will be losing proposition.

Before you act on those "too good to be true" offers, please review some of the scam indicators:

- Offers large sums of money for a small fee
- Promises to send you money, products, or services for a small fee
- Offers you a special deal for a fee
- Asks assistance in removing funds

from a foreign country

- Offers a loan in exchange for a fee in advance
- Payment for your assistance in transfer of a large sum of money into an account
- You are the beneficiary of an unknown wealthy person who has died
- You've won some unknown lottery

To complete this fraudulent transaction you may be required to provide personally identifiable information, such as your social security number, date of birth or account information. If you do this, you will lose.

Avoid being victimized. Do not believe the promise of large sums of money, do not provide PII or bank

account information and do not reply to the email solicitation.

If solicited, immediately file a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center www.ic3.gov/default.aspx. The IC3's mission is to serve as a vehicle to receive, develop, and refer criminal complaints regarding the rapidly expanding arena of cyber crime. If you've experienced significant financial loss due to Internet Fraud, contact the U.S. Secret Service Field Office, located in Savannah, at 912-652-4401. For additional information go to www.secretservice.gov/faq.shtml.

You may receive a letter or fax. Don't be fooled; it is the same con game. It will promise you something for little or nothing and, if acted upon, you end up being another statistic.

DOD must train for 'degraded' environments, official says

Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The military needs to do a better job of training to conduct operations in less-than-perfect conditions, the chairman of the Defense Science Board said Feb. 9.

Paul G. Kaminski said that given the cyber and space threat environment that exists today and likely will grow in the future, commanders must be ready for these types of operations.

Mr. Kaminiski spoke in advance of the science board's summer study that will be released shortly.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff agrees. In the National Military Strategy released Feb. 8, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen wrote, "Our ability to operate effectively in space and cyberspace, in particular, is increasingly essential to defeating aggression. The United States faces persistent, widespread and growing threats from state and nonstate actors in space and cyberspace."

The chairman said the U.S. military, "must grow capabilities that enable operations when a common domain is unusable or inaccessible."

Building workarounds, isolating or cauterizing a cyber

attack are things that commanders should learn in an exercise, not on the battlefield, Mr. Kaminski said.

"We think we are falling way short in what we need to be doing to look at degraded operations," he said.

Degraded operations are caused by unanticipated changes in the environment and unanticipated changes in how systems perform. They affect a number of Defense Department capabilities, including command, control and communications systems and "all of the netcentric activities that we are dependent upon that certainly going to be attacks in active cyber ways," Mr. Kaminski said.

Degraded operations also will affect U.S. dependence on both orbital and airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets, Mr. Kaminski said.

An enemy could attempt to degrade the environment and attack the U.S. military's reliance on electronic navigation and the American dependence on electronic warfare in general, he explained, and this could reach to trying to disrupt supplies through the U.S. critical logistics infrastructure.

The Defense Science Board looked at what the department is doing to prepare for degraded operations at four levels: the strategic level, the operational level, the tactical level and the individual level.

"We find differences in the services at the individual level," Mr. Kaminski said. "The Marines still turn off GPS systems and use a map and compass to find their way by dead reckoning. Special operators also do some good training."

But the farther up the chain, "the worse it gets as far as training that we do," he added.

When the Air Force first put electronic warfare into its Red Flag combat training exercises, Mr. Kaminski said, "they decided not to do it again, because it ruined the whole exercise."

One way to conduct degraded-environment exercises, Kaminski said, is to introduce the environment and grade people on how they react. Another is to keep pushing the envelope until the system breaks. A combination of the two scenarios is necessary, he told the defense writers.

"You need to conduct the break-the-system exercises and put it into the training where we grade people," he said. "This is not a high-cost thing to do. It is a high-opportunity cost, because to do this right, you need to have senior leaders in place to participate so it does place demands on people's schedules. But this needs to be addressed."

Education Matters



College registration now open

The upcoming Spring II term dates both on-post and distance learning classes are listed below. Some courses are offered during the day. Enrollment is offered to all. Please contact the college directly for course schedules and enrollment information.

Central Texas College – 912-767-2070/ Hunter Airfield 912-315-4090, 21 Mar-15 May

Columbia College – 912-767-5336/ Hunter Army Airfield 912-352-8635, 21 Mar-15 May

Embry Riddle – 912-767-0339/ Hunter Army Airfield 912-352-5252, 21 Mar-22 May

Savannah Tech – 912-408-2430, 30 Mar-13 Jun

Webster University – 912-767-5357/ Hunter Army Airfield 912-354-0033, 14 Mar-12 May

Hope Grant for College Credit offered

The Georgia HOPE grant is now available to Georgia residents, active duty military assigned to a military installation in Georgia and their Family Members. Many HOPE eligible diploma and certificate programs are offered by Technical Colleges throughout Georgia, including Savannah Technical College, Airport Rd. in Hinesville. Some classes are even available on-line or in the Fort Stewart Education Center.

Of special interest to those who cannot use My CAA, Savannah Technical College has the Technical Communications Specialist program, which is a great option to fulfill the General Education Requirement courses for your degree. Under this particular certificate program, the Hope Grant will cover the cost of classes that can later be transferred to most other colleges and universities.

For more information, click on www.gsfc.org and www.savannahtech.edu or call Savannah Tech, Education Center, 912-408-2430; Hinesville, 912-408-3024; Savannah, 912-443-5700. For additional on-line classes, explore the Georgia Virtual Technical College Web site at www.gvtc.org.

Register for GED classes

Adult Literacy and GED preparation courses are offered by the Liberty County Adult Education Program at Fort Stewart in the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Education Center. The free classes are held in either morning, afternoon or evening sessions and will prepare you to take the GED or refresh your skills in basic education subjects. The next registration opportunity is Feb. 22-23 in room 228. You must be present both consecutive days from 1-5 p.m. to complete the enrollment process. Certain items are necessary to register, so call 912-368-7322 for complete details.

GoArmyEd temporarily offline

GoArmyEd on-line access will not be available between 7 p.m. ET on Friday, 18 Feb. and 11:59 p.m. ET on Monday, Feb. 21, to relocate to a new hosting facility over the President's Day Holiday Weekend. The GoArmyEd Help Desk, 1-800-817-9990, will be available during regular business hours to receive calls during this system outage. Please plan your work accordingly.

Register for College Graduation

Have you completed your college degree or earned a post-secondary certificate anytime after Aug. 2009? Are you due to get your degree by this August? Or will you be within nine semester hours of completing your requirements by August? If so, you are invited to participate in the Stewart-Hunter "All College Commencement," June 24th. It will be held at the Main Post Chapel, Fort Stewart, building 500, at 7 p.m. The graduation brochure will list all graduates, or soon to be graduates. To have your name listed, even if you do not plan to attend, we must hear from you!

We request that any military, Family Members, retirees, and civilian/contract employees attending "On-Post" Schools (CTC, Columbia, ERAU, Savannah Tech and Webster), contact their college right away. For those attending off-post schools, please complete the electronic "Candidate for Graduation" form at www.stewart.army.mil/services/education/gradForm/gradform.asp. Your early submission will also allow us to announce your name as you walk down the aisle in front of your Family and friends! Forms are also available at the SFC Paul R. Smith Army Education Center. In April, the graduate will be sent a memo with additional information and instructions. For more information, contact Sherail Freshher, 767-8331 or e-mail Sherail.d.fresher@conus.army.mil

MyCAA available for spouses

The Department of Defense has resumed the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts, MyCAA, program for qualifying spouses only. The program now assists spouses of active duty servicemembers in the pay grades of private to sergeant, warrant officers 1/2, first lieutenant, and second lieutenant to achieve portable careers. The approved education programs are only associate's degrees, licensure, and certifications. Funding assistance will be up to \$4,000 with an annual cap of \$2,000 per fiscal year. To open an account and to see the full details of the new program, go to the secure website, <https://aiportal.acc.af.mil/mycaa>. Please allow 14 days for approval of all financial assistance documents. If information is needed on other sources of financial assistance please contact a Military OneSource consultant at 800-342-9647.

CLEP now at Stewart, Hunter

The College Level Examination Program and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests are now available at both education center sites. The exams are free for military personnel however; there is now a charge to re-test on a previously administered exam. CLEP tests are \$92 and DSSTs are \$100. The Hunter Test Center requires pre-registration: www.ccis.edu/nationwide/main.asp?Hunter. Contact the Columbia College test administrator by calling 912-352-8635 at Hunter or 912-767-7588 at Fort Stewart.

Columbia offers spouse scholarship

Spouses of military personnel can take their first classroom course free while they complete their financial aid paperwork and enrollment procedures with Columbia College. The active-duty member does not have to be enrolled with Columbia College. In addition, Columbia offers spouses a 20 percent tuition discount for "in-seat" (classroom) courses. For more information, call 912-877-3406 or 912-352-8635 at Hunter.

Source available for Post-9/11 GI Bill

The Post-9/11 GI Bill, Chapter 33, is a non-contributory benefit (no up-front payment required by Soldiers) for those who served on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001. The Veterans Administration Web site at www.gibill.va.gov provides in-depth eligibility information for all VA chapters and a link to the on-line application. It also includes all information and steps concerning the transferability to Family Members. Also check out the new Web site, www.ebenefits.va.gov where you can view the status of your VA benefits and much more. If you have questions after exploring the Web site, call 888-442-4551.

Check out the eBenefits Portal

The Veterans Administration has a new website called eBenefits where a Soldier can view the status of all his/her VA Benefits (pension claims, GI Bill, home loan certification, etc). This portal is a one-stop shop for benefits-related online tools and information for Wounded Warriors, Veterans, Service members, Family of Service Members, and those who care for them. It's a personalized workspace giving quick access to online tools integrated into eBenefits - tools that let you apply for benefits, download your DD 214, see your benefits status online, learn about state benefits and much more. You must be enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) to create an account. Active duty can use their CAC Card to gain access. Others must go to a VA location to get a log-on ID. Click on www.ebenefits.va.gov for more information.

Senior leaders hold ruck march, encourage morale

**103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)
Public Affairs**

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq—“You doing all right, first sergeant?” Command Sergeant Major Clifton Johnson, command Sgt. Maj. of the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Lima, Ohio, native, yelled as he made his way to the rally point.

“Fired up, sergeant major!” replied 1st Sgt. LaShay White, first sergeant of 8th Ordnance Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd ESC, and a Mobile, Ala., native. She was only a step behind him, and maintained that distance throughout the entire ruck march.

“Fired up times two!” she said.

For her, it wasn’t just a statement, as she was one of the first to finish the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd ESC’s Senior NCO five-mile ruck march held Jan. 28. The event, hosted by Johnson, the 3rd Sustainment Brigade senior enlisted advisor, included nearly every promotable sergeant first class and higher in the brigade.

“Every rotation I’ve ever been on, I’ve done a senior leader ruck march,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson, currently on his third deployment to Iraq. “It’s for esprit de corps, it’s for motivation, a challenge for my leaders, and it allows them to go out there and challenge the Soldiers.”

For 1st Sgt. White, this was the type of challenge that is important for all senior leaders.

“I think it’s awesome,” 1st Sgt. White said. “You get to assess where you are before you get out there in front of the Soldiers.”

Command Sergeant Major Jason Runnels, command Sgt. Maj. and senior enlisted advisor for the 14th Movement Control Battalion, 103rd ESC, and a native of Baton Rouge, La., agreed, adding that the event also added an element that some senior leaders don’t get a chance to do very often.

“I thought it was a good esprit de corps, and team-building event for the senior leaders,” he said. “It allows you to communicate and talk with one another. You can exchange information while you’re getting some exercise at the same time.”

The route, which began in front of the brigade headquarters, took the group on varies types of terrain from sidewalks, to roads to uneven terrain. Despite the changes in terrain, Command Sgt.



Courtesy Photo

Command Sergeant Major Clifton Johnson, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Jason Runnels, 14th Movement Control Battalion, 103rd ESC, lead the brigade on a five-mile Senior Leader ruck march Jan. 28 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. This is the third time the brigade has hosted this event.

Maj. Johnson said the intent was for the group to start strong and finish together.

“I think they did great,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson. “They were challenged; I didn’t want to waste their time.”

He added that the event also served as an early train-up for the brigade’s upcoming 12-mile ruck march, which they will complete before redeploy-

ing this spring. The goal, Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson said, is to finish it within the 18th Airborne Corps Fit-to-Fight standard of four hours or less.

“It gives the guys an idea of what it feels like,” Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson said, “but most of these guys have been doing this their whole careers.”

Chairman asks communities to help veterans reach their dreams

**Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON - He is proud and privileged to lead a military that is the best he has seen in more than 40 years wearing the uniform, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said Feb. 10.

Speaking during a town hall meeting at Capitol Theatre in Chambersburg, Pa., Navy Adm. Mike Mullen said, “I’ll state the case up front: I believe that there is in our country “a” ‘sea of goodwill’ to support our men and women in uniform, and their Families, and we are now in our tenth year of war.”

The chairman has traveled around the nation for his “Conversations with the

Country” since last April, working to raise awareness of how Americans can help veterans and their Families return successfully from war to civilian life.

“They are extraordinary young men and women, and they come from all over the country - and in some cases all over the world,” Adm Mullen said. “They make a difference, and they want to make a difference.”

The same service and sacrifice the nation witnessed in Iraq is now occurring in Afghanistan, Adm Mullen said and those who do so are on average in their early 20s.

“They bear this burden proudly, they care deeply about our country, and it is the freedoms we enjoy that they serve

to make sure are never, ever in question,” he said.

Many soldiers have deployed four or five times, the chairman said.

“The first one was six months, the second one was eight months, and after that we went to 12 months, and 15 months and 15 months, and we’re now back to 12 months,” he said.

Between deployments those troops got only as much time as they had spent away, Adm. Mullen said, and typically spent half of that time away from home.

For Marines, deployments are shorter but more frequent – “Seven months out, seven months back, since the war started,” he said.

The change that punishing schedule has wrought in Iraq is “breathtaking,” Adm. Mullen said.

“It is about politics in Iraq now, it’s not about violence,” he said. “And it’s about a future for 26 million people.”

There are young Americans who gave their lives and many others who served and sacrificed to create that possibility, the Adm Mullen said.

“In Afghanistan, we still are on this kind of rotation ... though we are now home longer than we are deployed,” he said.

Admiral Mullen said for him, part of the conversation is “I want to make sure we are facing the fullness of these wars.”

Vanguard Brigade cook raises morale at Camp Fallujah



Matthew Burrell

Sergeant Paul Harris, head cook with Co. E., 703rd BSB, 4th AAB, 3rd ID, USD – Center, prepares his specialty, marinated and grilled lobster tail, Jan. 26 at Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

Matthew Burrell
4th AAB, 3rd ID

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq—Succulent shrimp scampi, creamy chicken alfredo, spicy red rice with chicken cutlets—sounds like the menu at a five-star restaurant, right? Not at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. This is your standard Monday evening meal at the dining facility here.

At an isolated forward operating base like Camp Fallujah, one of the biggest challenges facing a commander is maintaining the mental and physical well-being of each Soldier. This task becomes a lot easier when the battalion has employed arguably one of the best U.S. Army cooks in Iraq—Sgt. Paul Harris.

“In my 20 years of service, I’ve never come across a better Army cook,” said Lt. Col. Eric Larsen, stability transition team leader with 4th “Vanguard” Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center. “He’s the best.”

Sergeant Harris, head cook with Company E, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div., said he takes his job very seriously. To him, it’s not just cooking the next meal—it’s a contributing factor in the Soldier’s morale and the esprit de corps on the base.

“The morale is pretty high around here right now,” Sgt. Harris said—an important development with the resident units recovering from the loss of two Soldiers just a few months ago.

This loss struck the heart and soul of the company, and canceling that Friday’s barbeque became a major consideration. However, Harris had another idea that would deliver a much needed morale boost to the

soldiers—T-bone steaks.

“Before then, we had just been eating regular food,” he said. “I knew the Soldiers really looked forward to the Friday evening barbeques.”

Sergeant Harris recognized that the Soldiers needed to be together, not alone. He asked the commander to have T-bone steaks delivered to the camp. The commander complied and it was a somber and emotional meal for everyone present.

Sergeant Harris said no one talked much during dinner. It wasn’t until that following Friday that the Soldiers began to open up and express their personal feelings. The loss of a fellow comrade is always difficult, but at Camp Fallujah, thanks to the weekly barbeques and the resulting openness of communication, the Soldiers are moving past the tragedy.

“Morale took a big hit in September, but we were able to push past it,” said 1st Lt. Andrew Boza, STT communications adviser with 4th AAB, 3rd ID “Soldiers are humans and humans need to socialize ... and there is a good amount of socializing that goes on at (Harris’) barbeques.”

Sergeant Harris, whose specialty is grilled lobster tail, has been grilling since he was 9 years old. He credits much of his culinary talent to his mother, a trained five-star chef.

Sergeant Harris has also expanded the barbeques to Wednesday night and introduced “soul food Sunday” at Camp Fallujah. He’s constantly improving the dining conditions on the camp by expanding the menu, maintaining a clean kitchen and ensuring the dining area is up to standard—along with the Vanguard morale.

UNIFORM

from Page 1A

Major General Cucolo acknowledges that as Senior Commander for Ft. Stewart and Hunter AAF, he could direct everyone go to the patrol cap, “...but I respect the external chains of command of our fantastic resident units - outfits like the 92nd Engineers, the 385th MPs and many others,” Maj. Gen. Cucolo continued. “Army regulations say the local commander can dictate which headgear to wear - which

is what I am doing with the Marne Division. Units not in the 3rd ID can adopt this policy and tell their chain of command they are conforming to the local Senior Commander, or they can stay in the beret if they or their senior leaders at other posts prefer they do not change.”

Why now?

“I’m slow. I’ve wanted to do this for some time now, and simply have not,”

Maj. Gen Cucolo concluded. “Coming off the deployment this past November convinced me the patrol cap just makes sense for a hard-working Soldier’s duty uniform. I see a short spring and a long hot summer of tough training just ahead of us, so I want to make the switch. There is nothing wrong with the beret; I like it, and I am proud to wear it because it is our Army headgear. But for Soldiers whose daily routine is hard work spent

most of the time out in the elements – which is the life of a Dog Face Soldier here in the Marne Division - the patrol cap is best for daily wear. And just recently I asked Marne 7 to take an informal sensing of senior NCOs; it was near-unanimous to make this minor change to our Marne Standard garrison duty uniform. That’s the last thing I needed to make this decision: backing from my NCOs.”

Vanguard Brigade engineers conduct route clearance

Matthew Burrell
4th AAB, 3rd ID

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq—The grounds of Camp Fallujah, located on the outskirts of the city hotly contested during Operation Iraqi Freedom, is garrison to the 1st Iraqi Army Infantry Division and home to a small contingent of U.S. Army combat engineers with the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center—all that remains of the U.S. presence through the ongoing transition to Iraqi self-sufficiency.

Since the beginning of Operation New Dawn, the security of the province has fallen on the shoulders of the Iraqi Security Forces, which have performed admirably against the last remnants of al-Qaeda in Iraq. That's not to say U.S. Soldiers don't have a role in the security of Fallujah.

For the engineers are often called at Camp Fallujah, their job in Iraq can still be very dangerous. Their mission is to seek out roadside bombs before the devices can harm anyone.

Recently, they conducted a combined route clearance patrol with the 1st Bomb Disposal Company, 1st Iraqi Army Inf. Div.

"We try to go out with them (multiple times) each week," said 1st Lt. Matt Fletcher, platoon leader with 3rd Platoon, Company A, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th AAB, 3rd ID.

Earlier this month, the platoon was hit with a n improvised explosive device. First Lieutenant Fletcher knows his men must tread carefully and remain vigilant because they are a big target.

"It's not like it used to be," said Staff Sgt. Tony Smith, platoon sergeant with 3rd Plt. Company A, BSTB.

Staff Sergeant Smith, who is serving his second deployment in Iraq, spent time in Ramadi in 2005 when Al Qaeda had a stranglehold on Anbar province.

"We'd get hit two or three times per day sometimes," he said. During Staff Sgt. Smith's current tour, that's how many times the platoon has been hit in the past six months.

Staff Sergeant Smith said despite the change in the environment, he understands the importance of doing the right thing while working with the ISF.

"We are now in the training role. We have to assist the Iraqis and make sure everything is good before the mission," 1st Lt. Fletcher said.

The ISF are still learning more technical aspects of soldiering, like proper maintenance, and need a little extra help in those areas, he said.

Before the combined patrol, Maj. Anthony Cole, stability transition team engineer adviser, inspected the Iraqi humvees before departing Camp Fallujah.

"They've come a long way since I've been here,"



Matthew Burrell

First Lieutenant Matt Fletcher (left), platoon leader with 3rd Platoon, Company A, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, and Staff Sgt. Tony Smith, platoon sergeant with 3rd Plt., Company A, BSTB, 4th AAB, 3rd ID speak with their Iraqi counterparts with the 1st Bomb Disposal Company, 1st Iraqi Army Infantry Division Jan. 24 during an after action review after the completion of their route clearance mission.

Maj. Cole said. "They are well on their way to being self-sufficient."

First Lieutenant Fletcher said one of the goals before his unit redeploys is to make sure the Iraqis are able to maintain their vehicles on their own. Company A has provided support and assistance with parts and maintenance thus far.

During the route clearance mission, the Iraqis spotted an overturned vehicle on the side of the road. First Lieutenant Fletcher decided to remain in an advisory role and let the Iraqis handle the situation.

First Lieutenant Fletcher said while the vehicle turned out not to be a threat, many situations on the road can present challenges, and you never know what to expect.

During the past three months, the Soldiers with 3rd Plt., Company A have really bonded with their Iraqi counterparts. At first, it was difficult to communicate with the Iraqi bomb disposal teams due to the language barrier, but the Soldiers found a unique way of overcoming the divide—humor.

"When I first got here, I was scared," said Spc. Robert Gilley, a heavy equipment operator with 3rd Plt., Company A. "I didn't know what to expect." Then, one day during a smoke break, the Iraqis and Americans found themselves together without an interpreter. The group was forced to resort to hand signals and gestures. In the end, they shared a good laugh at the awkwardness of the situation. The Iraqis have a great sense of humor, he said.

A rose from Holly on Warriors Walk



Photos by Sgt. Robert Schaffner, Jr.

Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division and Family Members distribute roses at Warriors Walk in honor of our fallen Soldiers, Feb. 14. The roses were donated by Ms. Holly, a volunteer who has dedicated vast parts of her life to supporting our Fallen Heros. Each year since 2005, she has donated roses for each of the fallen in section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery, along with other Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom sites within the cemetery. Each year, Ms. Holly invites all Families of Soldiers buried there, along with active-duty units across the country, to join her with distributing roses. The roses are emplaced on the Saturday before Valentine's Day and are allowed to remain through the balance of the "artificial season" at Arlington. The 3rd ID has actively supported Holly at Arlington, and, with her support, also emplaces roses at each tree along Warriors Walk each February.

Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Briefs

Commissary scholarship deadline Tuesday

The Defense Commissary Agency reminds community members that 'Scholarships for Military Children' Applications are due this year by Feb. 22. Applications are available at the Fort Stewart commissary or online at www.commissaries.com. Applicant can turn their application in at their installation commissary. For more information visit www.militaryscholar.org/sfmc/application.html or call 856-616-9311.

3rd ID Reunion scheduled

The Society of the 3rd Infantry Division and attached units in wars and in peacetime will hold their 92nd annual reunion Sept. 8-11. The reunion will be held at the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel, French Quarter, 739 Canal Street at Bourbon, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130. The toll free number is 888-696-4806. Room rates are \$99 per night plus tax. The Society of the Third Infantry Division is seeking those who served in the 3rd and attached units in wars, peacetime, or special interest to join the Society. Contact Henry Burke 803-782-7517. E-mail: pennieburke@sc.rr.com. For additional reunion information, contact, Trish Blanton or email Info@TheReunionBrat.com.

Military OneSource Offers Tax Assistance

The Military OneSource Tax Program has begun! The program provides free access to a customized version of the basic H&R Block at home electronic tax-filing product which allows for free federal filing and free state filing (up to three states). In addition, free telephonic tax consultations are available to help with tax related issues. To learn more about the program and filing your 2010 taxes, please go to: www.militaryonesource.com.

Lost an item? Found an item?

Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield have a lost and found program. If you want to report or check on a lost item, visit building 280, 354 East Bultman Avenue on Fort Stewart and check with Detective Hooks, 912-767-9596/9026. The Hunter Army Airfield point of contact is Detective Battista, at building 1240, 197 South Lightning Road at 912-315-5374/2940.

STEWART

ACP's change hours

Beginning today, the Access Control Points at Gate 2 (4th Street), Gate 3 (Harmon Ave.) and Gate 8 (Frank Cochran) will be opened at 5 a.m., Mondays through Fridays. The traffic light/signal located at E. Bultman and Gulick will be set to flash amber for north and south-bound traffic and red for east and westbound traffic from 5-6:30 a.m. Gate 2 will continue to be closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Please be mindful and cautious with your travels while attempts are made to improve access to the installation.

Come out to Marne Call

Come out to Thunder Run for Friday Marne Call/ Club Night, Friday, Feb. 18, and 25 from 5 p.m.-3 a.m., at Club Stewart, building 405. Come relax Fridays at Thunder Run and enjoy karaoke, music, snacks and lots of fun. The DJ plays Top 40's until 3 a.m. For details, call 912-368-2212.

Single Soldiers Rock, bowl nights

Come out to Hunter Lanes from 9 p.m.-midnight, Feb. 12, 19, 26 at Hunter Lanes Bowling Center, building 1280. Single Soldiers are invited to come on out and take advantage of special bowling prices just for Single Soldiers while listening to favorite music. \$2 per game/person and \$1.75 shoe rental. For details, call 912-315-6279.

ACPs begin periodic lane closures

Through 4 p.m., Feb. 18, Access Control Points 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9 will be subject to periodic lane closures. The lanes will be shut down during off peak hours to complete punch list items on the gates. Detour signs and traffic control devices will be displayed and posted for the duration of the traffic lane shift. The POC regarding additional information relative to the above is Mr. Kyle Loudermilk, Corps of Engineers, at 912-767-3287.

Rita Ackerman scholarship available

Applications are being taken for the Rita Ackerman Scholarship. This scholarship was created specifically to be awarded to the spouse of any enlisted servicemember, either active-duty or retired. It is awarded in memory of Rita Ackerman, who was an active spouse in the Fort Stewart community. She was one of the driving forces of the Spouses' Club as well as a volunteer in other organizations such as the Thrift Shop, ACS, Red Cross and other worthy causes. It was Rita's dream that everyone be able to obtain the education they needed to be able to take care of themselves and their Families. Applications are available at the Fort Stewart Library, the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Education Center, and at Savannah Tech. They must be post marked by April 1, 2011 to be eligible for consideration. For more information, contact Maggie Roberts at 912-369-6478.

Lunch, learn at chapel

Ever wonder how you could teach in a better way? Through March 15, Director of Religious Education, Mr. Mike Iliff, will lead a "Lunch & Learn" session at Marne Chapel, entitled "Teaching with Style." This video series will take place during the lunch hour and is open to the community. "Lunch & Learn" will assist you in discovering what your students want you to know - but are afraid to tell you. A light lunch will be provided every Tuesday 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Anyone interested in attending should RSVP to Mrs. Bolton at 912-767-8801. Childcare will NOT be available.

Road closure thru April

Through 5 p.m., April 15, 15th Street between McFarland Avenue and Tank Trail 40 will be closed to all traffic. Subject closure is necessary for the widening of 15th Street. Detour signs will be displayed and posted for the duration of the project. The POC regarding additional information is Joyce Oglesby, Corps of Engineers, 912-767-9908.

COMET offers Soldier training

Need Soldier Training? The Fort Stewart Command Maintenance Evaluation and Training Team subject matter experts are ready to assist units seeking to evaluate and train Soldiers within supply and ground maintenance arenas. We offer formal training classes on maintenance, records management, supply/property accountability, drivers/licensing program, publications and much more. The COMET team is always willing to assist units in evaluating their maintenance and supply program through formal and informal evaluations ensuring a unit is within the Fort Stewart and Army Standard. Do you have questions on the Command and Supply Discipline Program? Call the supply team and receive up-to-date and accurate tips on making your unit's program work. Do you need a refresher course on running readiness reports at your maintenance facility? Request a staff assisted visit and receive one-on-one training with a technical expert. We are located in building 623, suite 144 just off

of William H. Wilson Avenue. Contact the COMET Program Manager at 912-767-1018 for questions regarding the COMET program or to request assistance, and remember; "The answer is yes! Now, how can we help you?"

Pasta night continues at Thunder Run

Have you heard? Thunder Run offers Pasta Night every Wednesday at Club Stewart from 5-9 p.m. This is an All-You-Can-Eat special for just \$9.95, children eat for half price! For more information, call 912-368-2212.

EMT refresher training offered

Training is scheduled Feb. 28, March 7, and March 14. All Soldiers in the rank of Sergeant First Class and below holding MOS 68W, Health Care Specialist must maintain a current, unrestricted, certification from the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. The NREMT re-certification is required for 68W every two years. The training will be at the Medical Simulation Training Center, building 701, right beside Popeye's, in the EMT room. Training is Feb 28 through March 4; March 7-11; and March 14-18, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The training can only accommodate 20 Soldiers at once. Enrollment is mandatory for this class and is on a first come first serve basis. If Soldiers do not enroll prior to the start of the class they will be required to attend at a later date. Please contact Mr. Martin, 912-767-1226 or elkanah.martin@us.army.mil for registration and next class dates.

Get your message out quickly

Use the Marne Message system to get information out to the Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield community of employees. From your computer, send your message to stewmsgrequest@conus.army.mil. Your information should populate the system within hours, if not sooner. Attachments cannot be included in MARNE Messages. Only command directed messages are included in MARNE messages.

HUNTER

Lotts Island changes

Effective Friday, the Lotts Island Recreation/ Picnic Area will be closed to accommodate the rest room/picnic pavilion upgrade construction. Traffic lanes to the island will be limited. Should a question arise, please contact DPW Inspections Branch, Howie Harris, 912-228-7123.

260th QM presents 1st program

The 260th Quartermaster Battalion at Hunter Army Airfield invites the public to their first Hunter Army Airfield Black History Month Program, 11:30 a.m., Feb. 24, in building 7920. Guest speaker is attorney at law, Saga Brown.

LEGAL NOTICE

Anyone having claims against, or who is indebted to the estate of **Pfc. Garrett Kalka**, E Co., 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., 31409, please contact 1st Lt. Daniel Marshall at 912-414-4049.

Anyone having claims against, or who is indebted to the estate of **Cpl. Catlin May**, C Co., 2-7, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga., 31314, please contact 1st Lt. Abraham Gates, Jr. at 706-799-6965.

Around the Department of Defense

DOD Takes Steps to Combat Childhood Obesity



Elaine Wilson
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department has joined forces with the nation to combat a childhood obesity epidemic that not only is a matter of health or nutrition, but also is a national security issue, a Pentagon official said.

“When the nation as a whole lacks in this issue, it’s pervasive,” Barbara Thompson, co-chair of DOD’s working group to combat obesity, told American Forces Press Service, noting obesity’s impact on everything from recruiting to the nation’s health system.

Today, First Lady Michelle Obama marked the one-year anniversary of her “Let’s Move” campaign, a nationwide initiative to promote making healthy food choices and increasing physical activity within homes, schools and communities. The aim, Obama has said, is to solve America’s childhood obesity epidemic within a generation.

“The physical and emotional health of an entire generation and the economic health and security of our nation is at stake,” Obama said at the Let’s Move launch last year.

America’s childhood obesity rates have tripled in the past 30 years, according to the Let’s Move website. Today, nearly one in three American children and about one in four military children are overweight or obese. This issue has a tremendous impact on the health system, and from a military standpoint, it can affect everything from recruiting and retention to the force’s ability to fight, said Thompson, who also serves as the director of the Pentagon’s office of family policy, children and youth.

Thompson cited a report called “Too Fat to Fight,” which states that 75 percent of Americans ages 17 to 24 are unable to join the military for various reasons, with being overweight or obese the leading medical cause.

“When you take into account that 50 percent of military youth enter the military or consider entering the military, that’s a huge pool we need to be focused on,” Thompson said.

Spurred on by the first lady’s efforts, the Defense Department formed a childhood obesity working group in August, with a committee of nearly 30 helping professionals from a variety of military backgrounds and expertise, Thompson said. The group includes pediatricians, Family medicine physicians, dietitians, nurses, public health professionals, military and civilian personnel experts, Family and child and youth professionals, and representatives from the Defense Commissary Agency, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

To tackle a daunting task, the group divided into four subcommittees: nutrition and health for children from birth to age 18, the Military Health System, food and fitness environments and education and strategic communications.

The committee then set out on a mission to improve the health and nutrition of Military Families, Thompson said.

“We’re developing a strategic action plan that cuts across the DOD’s food environment,” she explained. “We have to look at our food courts, our school menus, how physically friendly is the installation so children can walk to school and bike to school to increase their physical activity, for example.

“It’s a very comprehensive look at what we can do as a department to help our Families make the right choices for their Families,” she added.

They’ve already made considerable progress, Thompson noted. With the Army taking the lead, officials are creating standardized menus for child development centers to ensure the centers are meeting children’s



Courtesy Photo

nutritional needs. They’re also working with vendors who supply the centers’ food to ensure they’re getting the freshest vegetables, lower-fat cuts of meat and less processed food laden with fats, salt and sugar.

Since children receive about two-thirds of their daily nutrition requirement while in military child care centers, these efforts are poised to have a significant impact, Thompson said, also noting that military youth and child development centers serve about 700,000 military youth on any given day.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to impact the way they think about healthy lifestyles,” she said.

Additionally, the committee is working to develop community gardens, healthy cooking classes and classes on the relationship between finances and food. Eating at home, for example, generally is less expensive than eating out, Thompson said.

Thompson also cited progress within the civilian sector that the military can adopt. The first lady is working with a major “super store” chain to reduce the number of products high in fat, salt and sugar and to boost the number of fruits and vegetables it offers, she explained, and commissary officials are looking into this as well. Commissaries already have increased the sales of fresh fruits and vegetables, she noted.

Additionally, the department is working to offer more healthy choices in vending machines, schools, dining facilities, clubs, bowling centers, food courts, and any other on-base locale that offers food, she said.

These changes not only will affect children in the short term with better stamina and well-being, but also will have a significant impact on their long-term health, Public Health Service Cmdr. (Dr.) Aileen Buckler, working group co-chair and TRICARE population health physician, told American Forces Press Service.

When a child is overweight or obese, particularly obese, she explained, they’re at a much higher risk of cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol, as well as increased blood

sugars, which can lead to higher rates of Type 2 diabetes at younger ages than what was seen in the past.

Weight issues often follow children through the years, Buckler noted. Studies show that about 85 percent of children ages 10 to 15 who were overweight became obese by age 25, she said. And children who are obese before age 8 are more likely to have more severe obesity as an adult, which can lead to greater risks of cardiovascular disease, stroke, certain types of cancer, osteoarthritis and even infertility, she added.

To keep these health issues from snowballing Buckler’s Military Health System subcommittee is taking action within health care offices nationwide. Members are working on a policy memo aimed at helping pediatricians, family physicians and civilian health care providers properly diagnose overweight and obesity in children, track trends and offer parents ideas of how they can help at home.

They’re also evaluating civilian and military toolkits on childhood obesity so they can develop a standardized toolkit for military and civilian providers, she added. This will ensure they reach the widest scope of children, including those of National Guard and Reserve Families.

Along with new initiatives, the committee is taking current, effective programs into account, Thompson said. The committee has gathered an inventory of current service programs to learn from effective practices with an aim to expand those programs across the department, she said.

But the department can’t accomplish this alone, Thompson noted. “It takes a village to make good change,” she said. “We need to bring the message to the important adults in their lives. And as adults, we need to be good role models for our children.”

Thompson summed up a healthy family goal with the aid of a few numbers: five-two-one-zero. People, she explained, should aim for five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, two hours or less of screen time, one hour of physical activity and zero sugary drinks.

About 40 percent of children’s calories are empty ones, she noted. “That is a real concern that they’re not getting enough vitamins and fiber,” she said.

The working group is factoring in the additional challenges Military Families face, Buckler noted, such as multiple deployments and frequent moves. During a deployment, for example, the at-home parent may find it more difficult to find time to shop for healthy foods or take children to physical activities such as soccer or basketball, she said.

“It probably makes eating healthy and getting activity into your life harder,” she acknowledged.

But military parents can take smaller steps toward change to start, she noted. They can choose skim milk instead of whole or reduced-fat milk or take a family walk or bike ride after dinner rather than turning on the TV.

“You can go play kickball or throw a ball around,” she suggested. “The goal is to get out of the house, get moving and away from the television.”

Thompson said she’s optimistic about the changes that have occurred and what is yet to come.

“The committee’s members are very passionate and committed to making positive changes,” she said. Thompson said the group plans to publish a full report with the group’s progress and recommendations in the spring.

Meanwhile, for more information on a healthy lifestyle, people can visit a service health and wellness facility, check in with a base fitness center or visit the Let’s Move campaign website at www.letsmove.gov or Military OneSource at <http://militaryonesource.com>.

Women learn to fight stress from home front

Terri Moon Cronk
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — During a week in which White House officials pledged a whole-of-government approach to supporting Military Families, 11 women worked diligently a few miles away to learn to cope with the stresses of their husbands’ multiple deployments and the post-traumatic stress that affects many of them when they return home.

Ten military wives and a fiancée met the week of Jan. 24 without the distractions from ringing phones, kids’ schedules and work projects. They learned coping skills through resilience training. They learned meditation, tried acupuncture, talked, laughed and cried.

The “significant others,” who found out first-hand that post-traumatic stress affects entire Families, came to the support group with more questions than answers. But they left armed with a battery of tools to cope with the everyday stresses of military life in a time of war.

The Significant Others Support Group is an offshoot of the Specialized Care Program their husbands completed following a diagnosis of combat stress or post-traumatic stress, or because they had difficulty readjusting to home life after war. Both programs are based on resilience and strength-building education conducted by the Defense Health Clinical Center at Walter Reed Army Medical Center here.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has called post-traumatic stress “the military health issue of our era.”

He and his wife, Deborah, are well-known advocates of taking care of the

Military Family, taking every opportunity to make it known they want war veterans and their Families to get all the help they need to cope with war’s invisible scars.

For five days, the Significant Others Support Group charter class studied family roles and relationships, how combat affects servicemembers, how to raise children during a stressful time in a lengthy war, and how to communicate about and deal with control issues when the deployment is over. They also learned the how to take care of themselves, an often-overlooked need.

“We don’t ‘cure’ people here,” said Dan Bullis, the director of administration and operations at the clinical center. “It’s the start of their journey to cope with symptoms.”

Because it affects the entire Family, efforts to confront post-traumatic stress must be include a family care plan, he said.

“It (it’s) is not a level playing field for them,” Mr. Bullis said, adding that he believes the support group will become even more successful as word spreads to new attendees and sponsors.

“In a weeks’ time,” he said, “12 to 14 [significant others] are equipped with tools to cope with life. It’s their lesson plan to take home so they can deal with the chronic symptoms. They’re so overwhelmed.”

The idea, Mr. Bullis said, was spawned from the husbands in the Specialized Care Program who began saying, “If only my significant other could get this support.” A pilot program that launched with five or six women progressed to the charter class of 11 last month, he added.

Thanks to a \$35,000 donation by the nonprofit Walter Reed Society, the 11

women were brought to Walter Reed on per diem travel, housed in a nearby hotel, and attended the training and education, all expenses paid.

Designing the support group for women came from a tried-and-true approach.

“We had a lot of input through the years from servicemembers to help their Families and significant others,” said Victoria Bruner, the center’s director of clinical education and training, who also is a social worker and expert in traumatic stress, with a background as a registered nurse. “Whether it’s a mother, brother, sister or adult child, we built the group on the basics of what helps people heal.”

A holistic approach, Ms. Bruner said, is important in an environment that promotes comfort, healing and peacefulness.

“The (significant others) need a sense of safety to feel comfortable to tell a story, and to connect to other people so they know they’re not alone,” she said. “It’s important to be in a safe environment, where people are assured their stories are honored and respected, so they can go as far as they want about their situation, or not.”

Ms. Bruner said the women in the support group see signs of strength in themselves to keep going - to bounce back and realize they’re not “crazy.” They learn how to practice patience, be more tolerant and supportive of their military family in a balanced manner, she added.

Ms. Bruner, who lost her husband in Vietnam, said it’s critical for the women “to get the support they need, to reduce the cost of war.”

Post-traumatic stress is not new -- it’s just another name for a phenomenon that’s been recognized since the Civil

War. “Melancholy,” “shell shock” and “battle fatigue” are among the names it’s had when it’s been observed in servicemembers in past conflicts.

Mr. Bullis, a former Army medic who served in Vietnam, said that during and after the Gulf War deployment in 1990 and 1991, 100,000 service members complained of what became known as “Gulf War syndrome.”

“It came from out of nowhere, and they had symptoms similar to chronic fatigue syndrome,” he said. Eventually, with no real medical cause found, it was called “medically unexplained physical symptoms.” And service in the Gulf War, he added, was never linked to it.

Mr. Bullis added that 20 percent to 30 percent of those deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan can develop symptoms of post-traumatic stress, but treatment can be successful if it is caught in its early stages. And medical staff members at military clinics worldwide are catching signs of the disorder at a rapid pace through routine screening, he added.

Yet, the average time it takes a service member to seek help after the onset of symptoms is a staggering 12 years, Mr. Bullis noted.

“It’s an invisible wound,” he said, “and it’s always a part of war.”

The Significant Others Support Group provides sessions on topics such as “Dealing with Adrenaline Overload,” “Understanding Triggers” and “Dealing with Things You Can’t Control.” It also provides relaxation and focus classes featuring Yoga Nidra, QiGong and acupuncture, as well as a massage donated by a local spa.

“This program,” she said, “gave me my husband back.”

HPV vaccination has proven benefits

Renee Reese

Fort Stewart Public Affairs

You may remember hearing about the human papillomavirus (also called HPV) but did you know that there is a vaccine that can help protect you against this infection? HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection according to the Centers for Disease Control, and currently there are two vaccines being offered, Gardasil and Cervarix, that can help protect you against the types of HPV that cause most cervical cancers.

This vaccine is not just for young girls or women. Boys and young men who receive the HPV vaccine appear to be at reduced risk of contracting the virus according to a recent article in the New England Journal of Medicine. According to the CDC, a study conducted in 1998-2003 estimated that about 24,900 HPV associated cancers occur each year. You might think that is pretty low, but remember that most people who become infected with HPV don't even know they have it according to the CDC.

There are more than 40 HPV types that can infect the genital areas of males and females. These HPV types can also infect the mouth and throat. For the record, HPV is not the same as herpes or HIV (the virus that causes AIDS). HPV is passed on through genital contact, most often during vaginal and anal sex



according to the CDC. HPV can be passed on between straight and same-sex partners even when the infected partner has no symptoms. In fact, symptoms are rare so most people who have HPV pass it on without realizing it, making a strong case for vaccinating males and females.

Both vaccines, Cervarix made by GlaxoSmithLine and Gardasil made by Merck, are licensed by the FDA and recommended by the CDC. Both vaccines are very effective against HPV types 16 and 18, which cause most cervical cancers. Our immunization clinics currently offer the Gardasil vaccine.

Both vaccines prevent cervical cancer and precancer in women according to the CDC. The vaccines are safe and given in shots that require three scheduled doses. The immunization clinic will advise you of the sched-

ule upon starting your first dose. Currently, the Gardasil vaccine also helps to protect against HPV types 6 and 11, which cause most genital warts in females and males according to the CDC. Should you want to protect you or your Family Member, anyone between the ages of 9-26 can get the vaccine at the immunization clinic. The clinic hours are from 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily with the exception of training holidays which are the 4th Thursday of each month and those hours are 1 to 4 p.m.

The CDC recommends that girls and young women ages 13 through 26 should get all three doses of an HPV vaccine if they have not received all doses yet. While the immunization clinic has not begun administering the vaccine to males, it is best that you talk with your primary care manager to discuss options until it becomes available at the clinic.

With an estimated 20 million Americans currently diagnosed with HPV according to the recent New England Journal of Medicine article, why take the risk when a safe and effective vaccine is available? More information about HPV or other sexually transmitted infections or diseases and the benefit of available vaccinations, can be found at www.cdc.gov or heath.com. The vaccination has been proven by the FDA to help prevent cervical cancer, which can be caused by HPV, and that should be enough reason to help protect your Family Member.



Soldier receives home after record-breaking build

Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.

Retired Staff Sgt. Jason Letterman, who was severely injured in Iraq, in 2008, cuts the ceremonial ribbon and receives the keys to his new specially-adapted home designed to provide maximum freedom of movement and the ability to live more independently, Feb. 12. A crowd of Soldiers and well wishers to include guest speaker U.S. Rep. Jack Kingston of Georgia, celebrated the record breaking Homes for Our Troops 22-day home build. Homes for our Troops provides specially-adapted homes to severely-injured veterans at no cost to the veteran.

Battalion commander escaped dictator in Uganda to pursue dreams in America

Vince Little

Fort Benning Public Affairs Specialist

FORT BENNING, Ga. — As a young boy growing up in Uganda, Joseph D’costa became inspired by America’s role in World War II and told his teacher he wanted to go to the U.S. Military Academy someday.

“She laughed at me for my dream of going to West Point, telling me it would be impossible because I wasn’t an American and Uganda had no ties to the U.S.,” he recalled. “I still remember that to this day.”

The 13th of 14 children raised by an Indian father and African mother, Lt. Col. D’costa was exiled to Austria at age 7 following Idi Amin’s rise to power in 1971. Two years later, he came to the United States and ultimately got into West Point on a third and final attempt, earning his commission in 1989.

Now a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve, he just completed a 10-month mobilization at Fort Benning as commander of 1st Battalion, 378th Infantry Regiment, a Lafayette, La.-based unit activated to augment basic combat training for the 192nd Infantry Brigade on Sand Hill.

“When we talk about the diversity of Soldiers across our Army, Lt. Col. D’Costa’s life story is one that tells a great story and serves as a motivational and inspiring example for our Soldiers, DoD civilians and the nation’s civilian population,” said Lt. Col. Roger O’Steen, the brigade’s executive officer.

Shortly after Amin seized the Ugandan presidency in a military coup, Lt. Col D’costa’s mother fell ill with pneumonia-like symptoms. Because of her Protestant faith, however, she didn’t get proper treatment as Amin decreed that anyone not a Muslim would get sent to the back of the line for health care. She died at 42.

“For me, it was very devastating, to realize the person I depended on so much was no longer there,” said Lt. Col. D’costa, who was 6 at the time.

He said Amin then declared that anybody who wasn’t 100 percent black had a choice: leave Uganda or face execution. Lt. Col. D’costa’s father fled to India, a brother and sister got sent to Italy, and he took exile in Austria with five other siblings. Three stayed behind.

“I was half, so I was considered impure and had to leave,” he said. “Here’s a black man saying, ‘You are not the perfect race.’ When you experience racism from your own race ... I was not expecting that.

“Idi Amin was killing so many innocent people when they weren’t leaving the country fast enough. Books were burned. Even educated blacks got killed because they were considered threats to Amin.”

The “Butcher of Uganda,” as he became known,



John D. Helms

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph D’costa receives the Order of St. Maurice during a transfer-of-authority ceremony Jan. 11 at Fort Benning.

ruled over the nation for eight years. The number of opponents who were killed, tortured or imprisoned varies from 100,000 to half a million, according to biographical accounts. The dictator was ousted in 1979 by Ugandan nationalists, after which he fled into exile.

In Austria, a Catholic priest looked after Lt. Col D’costa, who spoke Swahili in Uganda and never learned English. In time, he was taught German.

Lieutenant Colonel D’costa said he told the priest about his desire to attend West Point. The priest was a friend of then-U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, who arranged for 9-year-old D’costa and several siblings to come to the United States. He went to live with an older brother in Englewood, N.J.

After graduating high school in 1983, Lt. Col. D’costa applied to West Point but got turned down.

“They said I’m not American and don’t speak English well enough, the very thing that teacher was telling me would happen,” he said.

So he joined the Army ROTC cadet corps at Providence College. Following his freshman year, the department head offered him a full scholarship, but he’d have to abandon his West Point dream and remain at Providence.

“It would’ve been the easy way out,” he said, “but

I needed to know how far I was willing to commit. I had given up on that, but (the ROTC department head) said, ‘If West Point is in your heart, you need to apply again.’”

Lieutenant Colonel D’costa submitted a second application, but West Point was already at its 1,500-cadet limit, so he had to go to the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School at Fort Monmouth, N.J., for a year and then apply again. If turned down, he would’ve been too old for another shot but was finally accepted and became a 21-year-old “plebe.”

He served in the Gulf War as a field artillery officer. Lieutenant Colonel D’costa left the Army in 1994 but joined the Reserve two years later. Since then, he’s deployed twice to Iraq, once to Afghanistan, and supported military relief missions following Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan earthquake.

Lieutenant Colonel D’Costa has been the 1st Battalion, 378th Infantry Regiment commander since 2008. A change of command ceremony takes place March 12 in Lafayette. He left Fort Benning on Feb. 11.

“I credit every success I’ve had to my faith in Jesus Christ, because I shouldn’t be alive today. My life should’ve ended in Uganda,” he said. “All these people I encountered along the way were put into my life to help me reach my goals. I never looked at my skin color as a reason I did not get to West Point at first. They were looking for certain qualities and tools I needed to learn.”

Lieutenant Colonel D’costa will return to work in the private sector, but he’s expected to graduate from the U.S. Army War College by July. From there, he’ll learn if the Army has any further plans for him.

The lieutenant colonel praised the U.S. military for preserving freedom around the globe and said he stays in the Army Reserve as a token of his appreciation.

“The United States could’ve said ‘no’ to me,” he said. “Putting my life on the line for a country that took me in is a small price to pay. Freedom is so priceless, and all I have to do is serve in the reserves to continue saying ‘thank you.’ Until the Army tells me to get out, I’ll stay.

“This is the greatest country in the world. When I say that, I’m not just saying it because I heard it from somebody else. ... The majority of Americans don’t know what it’s like when you have no freedom.”

Lieutenant Colonel D’costa ultimately hopes to work for NASA. In the late 1990s, he spent two years with the agency in a liaison role for Enron.

“West Point seemed like an impossible goal ... but I kept pursuing that goal till I made it happen,” he said. “You can achieve anything you want — you just have to put a little effort into it.”

Driven Soldier looks to past for inspiration

Spc. Jared S. Eastman
1st HBCT, 3rd Infantry Division

FORT STEWART – Sergeant Eddie Clark is your typical 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team Soldier in many ways: he's motivated, strong-willed and proficient. However, he is one of the few Soldiers that has received a battlefield promotion and is hoping to be an officer.

"Sergeant Clark is probably one of the most driven, ambitious Soldiers that I've met," said Sgt. 1st Class Keisha Alvarenga, 1st Bde. legal non-commissioned officer in charge, "From day one when I picked him up from the processing center he was talking about all the stuff he wanted to do- green berets, ranger, all this stuff and he was just a specialist out of Advanced Individual Training. He was like a sponge, he soaked everything up. Anything you told him to do he would do it. He was always wanting to find ways to improve and make himself better, not just in his work, but as a Soldier."

Sergeant Clark is the legal assistance non-commissioned officer in 1st Bde. and does his job with pride.

"We specialize in legal actions as far as providing legal assistance for Soldiers, dealing with power of attorney or preparing them to see an attorney in legal matters - whether it's criminal, Family law or legal actions," said Sgt. Clark. "A pet peeve about legal is that every time someone sees us they think they are going to get in trouble; we actually help people. I chose this job because I felt it is something that has benefits in the civilian world."

Sergeant Clark is also one of the chosen few who received a battlefield promotion during the "Raider Brigade's" recent deployment to Iraq.

"Getting a battlefield promotion meant a lot to me," Sgt. Clark said, "I

had a good opportunity to work with NCOs that trained me and I was also self-motivated and ambitious. I'm pretty happy about it as I don't think any other paralegal has received that honor."

The U.S. Army discontinued battlefield promotions after Vietnam but reinstated it in 2009 to allow Soldiers who display extraordinary performance of duties while serving in combat or under combat conditions to be promoted one grade without having to attend a promotion board or meeting time in service or grade requirements.

"When the opportunity came for [Clark] to get a battlefield promotion he had to endure a lot," said Sgt. 1st Class Alvarenga. "He went to the range about five times, took his PT test and scored 300 or above, and submitting all that paper work and making him competitive. Ever since he pinned on the stripes and became an NCO he has raised the bar. He's the type of Soldier that any leader would love to have. When we deployed to Iraq, I put him in charge of the legal assistance section as a specialist and he did a remarkable job, I didn't have to watch him closely. He is always going above and beyond his level."

But Sgt. Clark has plans for the future that involve bars of gold and silver, and hopefully even oak leaf clusters.

"He's very ambitious," said Sgt. 1st Class Alvarenga, "After becoming an NCO and going this far in the enlisted realm he now wants to be an officer. He went to the officer board, did fantastic, and they were very impressed with him. So hopefully he will be picked up for Officer Candidate School and become an officer."

When it comes to motivation, Sgt. Clark points to his father as inspiration.

"My role model is my father," said Sgt.



Spc. Jared S. Eastman

Colonel Roger Cloutier, former 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team commander, promotes Spc. Eddie Clark to Sergeant during a battlefield promotion on Contingency Operating Station Falcon, June 16.

Clark, smiling, "He is a retired field artillery Sergeant First Class, he taught me a lot of necessary tools in life to be successful; as far as having the discipline, the 'go-getter' mentality and making sure that when you set out to do something you do it. He taught me a lot of things about how to be a man, and some of the things I didn't realize would help me start off well in the military."

This month also has a special significance for Sgt. Clark, as it is African American History Month.

"The month in itself reminds me of all the people that came before us that sacrificed their lives just to make everything equal," said Sgt. Clark, "Not just for African Americans but for all minorities. It reminds me how far we've come. Being an African American in today's culture is a privilege. I've been lucky not to have to

go through prejudice and extremes to succeed."

However, no matter what era Sgt. Clark may have been born in its safe to say his qualities would remain the same. According to his superiors he is ambitious, caring, and spirited- an NCO who sacrifices time both on and off the clock to help others.

"Another quality about Sgt. Clark is that he is very caring, very passionate," said Sgt. 1st Class Alvarenga, "He is always willing to sacrifice personal time or whatever he needs to help someone else out. His overall performance is amazing; he is all about doing things as perfectly as possible."

"He's driven," she continued, "To me motivation is so important to being an NCO because if you don't have motivation you can't motivate your Soldiers."

Soldiers, Airmen celebrate Chinese New Year

Sgt. Gaelen Lowers

3rd Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — Soldiers, Airmen and civilians celebrated the Chinese New Year Feb. 3 with food, games and karaoke at the Dragon's Den at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The Chinese calendar has been in continuous use for centuries and predates the International Calendar, based on the Gregorian calendar, by more than 430 years. Because the Chinese calendar follows the lunar cycle, this is the year 4708. Each new year is associated with one of 12 different animals. This year is the year of the rabbit.

The Chinese New Year celebration, or XinMao as it is formally named in Chinese, started out with many traditional dishes including cucumber kimchee, Bulgogi, which is grilled, marinated sliced beef, kimbap, which is Korean sushi, Filipino fried noodles, called pansit, lumpia, which is fried beef and vegetables rolls, and various other items in Asian cuisine.

After dinner, attendees played trivia games, tried out different activities and sang karaoke.

"I think everyone had a good time today," said Staff Sgt. Francis Robinson, intensive care unit technician for the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, and a native of Olympia, Wash., helped as an event organizer. "It has taught everybody a little about Chinese culture. I definitely think everybody enjoyed themselves."

Robinson added that honoring the celebrations of other cultures was important for everyone, especially those who serve in the military.

"Being in the military, we have such a diverse group of people," she said. "We work with people from all over the world. It's good to experience other people's cultures. No matter what country you're from or they're from, it's all about learning and being able to have that cultural awareness and diversity."

First Lieutenant Youngmoon Shim, officer in charge of the communications and network operations section for the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a native of Seoul, South Korea, and one of the organizers for the event, emphasized that taking time to relax in a deployed environment was also important.

"This is a very stressful environment, and I thought this would be something special for everyone to relax and enjoy," she added. "Even though I am not Chinese, I, as a Korean, celebrate Chinese New Year. I am glad we could provide a different cultural experience to Servicemembers in a fun way under a deployed environment."

Captain Sherod Davis (standing), trial counsel for the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), jokes with Capt. Jennifer Yang, 3rd Sust. Bde. judge advocate and 1st Lt. Liliane Delva, postal officer for the 3rd Sust. Bde.



Sgt. Gaelen Lowers

Brigadier General Kurt Neubauer, commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, a native of Surprise, Ariz., inspects a bottle of Mae Ploy Sweet Chilli Sauce, during the Chinese New Year celebration Feb. 4 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Sgt. Gaelen Lowers